

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended): Apparatus for processing a substrate having a thickness of 250 microns or less, said apparatus including a chamber, plasma creation element or elements for creating a plasma in a zone of the chamber, and an electrostatic chuck for retaining a substrate at a substrate location in or adjacent to the zone such that an upper surface of the substrate faces away from the chuck, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the apparatus further includes a dark space shield disposed on the zone side of the chuck ~~circumjacent or overlying the periphery of a peripheral portion of the upper surface the substrate at the location for preventing the presence of plasma between the shield and the periphery portion of the upper surface of a the substrate in~~ at the location whilst allowing processing of the substrate.

2. (currently amended): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the shield is generally annular and circumjacent the chuck.

3. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the shield is electrically conducting.

4. (original): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the shield is grounded.

5. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the chuck is also a plasma creating element.

6. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the chuck is powered.

7. (currently amended): A method of processing a substrate having a thickness of 250 microns or less, said method comprising including electrostatically clamping the substrate to a chuck, creating a plasma adjacent the outwardly facing face of the clamped substrate, and locating a dark space shield overlying ~~between the plasma and the periphery of the outwardly facing face of the clamped~~ substrate to prevent the presence of plasma between the shield and the periphery whilst allowing processing of the substrate.

8. (currently amended): A method as claimed in Claim ~~[[2]]~~ 7 wherein the substrate thickness is less than or equal to 100 microns.